



# LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

*Celebrating 25 Years of Advocacy & Achievement*

## COMMISSIONERS

Patricia Curry  
**Chair**

Susan F. Friedman  
**Vice Chair**

Steven M. Olivas, Esq.  
**Vice Chair**

Stacey Savelle  
**Vice Chair**

Carol O. Biondi  
Ann Franzen  
Helen A. Kleinberg  
Dr. La-Doris McClanney  
Rev. Cecil L. Murray  
Tina Pedersen, LCSW  
Sandra Rudnick  
Adelina Sorkin, LCSW/ACSW  
Martha Trevino Powell  
Dr. Harriette F. Williams

## APPROVED MINUTES

The Special Retreat Meeting of the Commission for Children and Families was held on Monday, **October 19, 2009**, at 128 S. Beverly Glen Blvd., Los Angeles. **Please note that these minutes are intended as a summary and not as a verbatim accounting or transcription of events at this meeting.**

### COMMISSIONERS PRESENT (Quorum Established)

Carol O. Biondi	Dr. La-Doris McClanney
Patricia Curry	Sandra Rudnick
Ann Franzen	Stacey Savelle
Susan F. Friedman	Adelina Sorkin, LCSW/ACSW
Helen A. Kleinberg	Dr. Harriette F. Williams

### COMMISSIONERS ABSENT (Excused/Unexcused)

Rev. Cecil L. Murray	Martha Trevino Powell
Steven M. Olivas, Esq.	
Tina Pedersen, LCSW	

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Curry at 10:10 a.m.

## **II. INTRODUCTIONS**

Self introductions were made.

## **III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

### Action Taken:

On motion of Chair Curry, seconded by Vice Chair Friedman, and unanimously carried, the Agenda for October 19, 2009, was approved.

## **IV. CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Curry thanked Commissioner McClanney for hosting the Commission's retreat and added the following:

500 West Temple Street, Hall of Administration, Room B-22, Los Angeles, CA 90012

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[www.lachildrenscommission.org](http://www.lachildrenscommission.org)

- Commission regular meetings for December 2009 are scheduled for December 7th and 21st. Since December 21, 2009 is within close proximity of the holidays, the meeting may be cancelled. The Commission's holiday party will follow the regular Commission meeting on December 7, 2009.

Commissioner Williams recommended that the Commission contact local restaurants to hold the Commission's holiday party. Chair Curry invited recommendations from Commissioners. Staff was asked to assist with the coordination of the event with the lead by Commissioner Franzen.

- The 2009 Annual Report is in the finalization stages. The Executive Committee met on October 2, 2009, and made several changes to the report. A meeting will be convened the week of October 26th to finalize the report before it is brought to the full Commission for approval.
- The Chair assured the Commission for Children and Families that they have Support from the Board of Supervisors (Board), and she encourages the Commission member to thank their respective Supervisors for not sunseting their Commission.
- It appears documents regarding child fatalities were provided to the media. Commissioners were encouraged to have dialogue with their respective Board offices regarding this issue.
- Commissioner Kleinberg noted a past practice of the Commission was meeting quarterly with the Board's children Deputies to inform them of the Commission's concerns and/or projects. Through this effort, the commission established a closer relationship with the Board. She recommended that meetings be reinstated.
- Rose Belda, Lead Attorney, Children's Special Investigation Unit, has been assigned by the Board to investigate child fatalities in the County's care. A meeting has been set with Ms. Belda and Chair Friedman of the Child Fatality Committee to discuss protocol on case review and information sharing, and how the Commission may offer recommendations and assistance.
- A meeting with County Counsel is being set to receive clarification on how Commissioners may communicate outside of meetings, what cases Commissioners are allowed to read from DCFS report logs, and how the Commission may provide recommendations and information to the Board.
- Jackie White, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Children & Families' Well-Being Cluster has expressed interest in meeting with the Commission to discuss children's services issues. A meeting with Ms. White will be scheduled in the near future.

**V. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**a. In setting the direction for the next year, Chair Curry discussed a number of current initiatives in the County including:**

- September 15, 2009 report by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to the Board regarding Child Safety ([Copy on File](#)).
- A number of trends by the Board, CEO and County Departments regarding data sharing information. The CEO is in the process of developing MOUs to establish the FCI System.

Another data sharing system being developed by Department of Mental Health is the EMPI system which should be operational in the coming year. With EMPI, when a child is entered into the DCFS system, a Children's Social Worker (CSW) can contact DMH to get their past DMH history. Within 24 hours the information can be sent to the Public Health Nurses who can contact the CSW with the information. Currently EMPI is limited to DCFS, but data to assist Probation will follow.

**b. Missouri Youth Justice Model**

Commissioner Biondi reported that she and 20 County representatives will be in Kansas City to review the national model for juvenile justice/rehabilitation in locked residential facilities. Representatives from Probation, DMH, CEO, LACO, Vince Holmes, Jackie Castor, and the Justice Deputies from all five Districts will be attending. Missouri sets the national model example because it has a sustaining recidivism of less than 8 percent. Missouri has a sustained 70% success rate as opposed to Los Angeles County's 70% failure rate. Missouri, in many experts' opinion, has a highly successful system.

The homes in Missouri are conducted in a family-style environment with a maximum of 48 clients. Their success is attributed towards a program directed on treatment rather than punishment. A comparable environment is the facility in Santa Clara where there's been a 50% drop in recidivism and a 50% drop in facility incidents. It's not guard-driven but controlled by counselors.

**c. Chair Curry then opened the discussion to all commissioners about the commission priorities for the coming year.**

- For consideration, Commissioner Savelle suggested that sub-committees set annual goals, making it easier to attain results. Four CEO priority groups have been chosen but they need consistent CEO staffing support.
- Commissioner Kleinberg suggested that elements from the Missouri Model be identified for use by the Committees. Commissioner Sorkin identified a current Department trend is moving youths towards KinGAP, the dilemma being once they are in KinGAP they do not have access to a Social Worker, which means

they have no access to services. Several Commissioners commented that Independent Living Program (ILP) funding was available via KinGAP.

- Discussion ensued on SB39-Migden relating to County welfare agencies and departments' child abuse and neglect case files. Commission Staff will provide Commissioners with copies of SB39.
  - Commissioner Kleinberg identified the issues of birth certificates and social security number issuance for children as items of major importance.
  - Commissioner Biondi reported that the Probation report on Crossover Youth had inaccurate numbers of children incarcerated in camps, largely due to two camp closures. She added that the highest percentage of children in one of the camps crossing over from DCFS to Probation in an individual was 70 percent.
  - Commissioner Kleinberg commented that the situations locally are more complex such as the percentage of youth who have mental health or co-dependency issues; the type of training given to counselors, and voluntary versus non-voluntary treatment and added that many of the youths have mental health issues which haven't been addressed. Commissioner Biondi advised the Commission that the counselors in this program are college graduates who specialize in Cognitive Behavior Treatment.
  - Commissioner Biondi further reported that the Probation Department is closely monitoring the Missouri Youth Justice Model; Deputy Jitahadi Imara is most interested in the system, and there will be three Probation Commissioners attending.
  - Commissioner Sorkin commented that past models were not taken into consideration by the Departments. Although it is a good therapeutic model, most of the energy is aimed at members of the community. Prevention is equally important as therapy: child abuse cases are 29% of children 5 years and younger. Also, a question to consider is will the model help the departments work together or will there still be more separate efforts from them.
  - AB 12 extends the age of KinGAP to age 24, but is delayed from passage because of budgetary reasons. Many youths undergo a very intensive after-care program.
- d. Commissioners discussed key areas of interest/concern to the Commission. These included:**
- Prevention
  - Faith-Based
  - Relative Care/Kinship
  - Child Fatality
  - Transition Age Youth (TAY)

- Education
- Wellness
- Crossover Youth
- Four Priorities Identified by CEO and Commission
- Aftercare
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Health Treatment
- Disproportionality
- Other discussion ideas included developing new goals for Committees, develop a time-line and master chart, review and progress reports

Chair Curry recommended committee Chairs to review their goals for the coming year; look for overlapping areas; and encouraged them to conduct joint meetings to share information. By Common Consent, the Commission approved Chair Curry's recommendation.

**Action:**

After discussion, by Common Consent, the Commission adopted the following priorities:

1. Vision – Create change – Gather resources – Role model collaboration – Include Community
2. Identify five or six elements of the Missouri Model, which include Family Support, Reunification, Youth Advocacy, Development, After Care and Prevention.
3. Committees will set annual goals and plan at least one joint Committee meeting in the coming year.
4. a) The Commission will hold joint meetings with other commissions  
b) Round table discussions  
c) Short memos to the Board
5. Create a timeline to track accomplishments and committee activities throughout the calendar year toward the achievement of commission goals.

Commissioner Kleinberg and Commissioner McClaney agreed to spearhead the Commission timeline. Chair Curry encouraged the commissioners to advise her of their interest or continued participation on a committee.

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

**VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioner Sorkin will attend the Disproportionality Committee meeting on behalf of Commissioner Savelle.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

On motion of Chair Curry, seconded by Commissioner McClaney and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.